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Book review

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Didactic audiovisual translation and foreign language education is a monograph written by Noa Talaván, Jennifer Lertola and Alberto Fernández-Costales and published in 2024. In the introduction of this book, the authors highlight the definition of Didactic Audiovisual Translation (DAT) as the combination of the different modes that constitute audiovisual translation, such as subtitling or dubbing with a pedagogical use, since the main use of this discipline is to improve the linguistic skills of the students in a lesson plan. They also explained the objectives of implementing techniques of audiovisual translation (AVT) activities at institutes of modern languages.

This is explained deeply in the first chapter, titled “Didactic AVT: Prior considerations.” The main points that characterize this chapter are the main AVT modes: subtitling, dubbing, audio description, voice-over, and free commentary. The authors delve into existing literature on the empirical evidence of each AVT mode. I would like to highlight the one conducted by González-Vera, in which the author explores the way in which DAT-based lesson plans foster the acquisition of specialized terminology rather than traditional lesson plans. I would like to emphasize that according to existing

literature, the most explored and used DAT modes a few years ago were subtitling and dubbing, and the other ones were less studied. It is due to the rapid technological advancements and the symbiotic relationship between research and innovation, which have meant an exponential growth of research in other DAT modes.

In the second chapter, “Educational bases or didactic AVT in FLE,” the benefits of incorporating AVT activities into language teaching and learning processes are set. It is a well-known fact that the implementation of this resource may offer potential advantages in primary and secondary schools, as it allows students to learn English in a different and more creative way than they are used to, and it also prepares them to create content as if they were teachers. Activities such as subtitling and dubbing are beneficial at primary school, since they make children acquire vocabulary or develop their mediation competence in a more attractive way for them.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 follow the same structure. The third chapter, titled “Didactic subtitling and didactic SDH,” begins with a definition of the formerly mentioned AVT modes and their language combinations: intralingual, interlingual, and creative. From the information in the book, it can be inferred that creative subtitling could be a more than beneficial activity since it adapts to a diversity of learners’ interests. Students are expected to produce a different version of the dialogues of the original audiovisual text, and the reaction to all the elements that appear here creates a special effect on each student. Then, in another subdivision of the chapter, the authors explain the skills and abilities that are developed through the process of subtitling: reception, production, and mediation. These skills are enhanced due to the fact that students should listen to the original text, then write the subtitles using a technological device and, finally, transfer the message to another person who has not listened to the original text. I strongly believe that it is essential to develop these skills to improve in learning a foreign language. In the case of didactic, subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH), the implementation of tasks related to SDH is crucial since the main aim of this mode is to improve the quality of people who suffer from hearing’s problems and to allow them to participate in these activities, despite their circumstances. At the end of the chapter, the authors provide the readers with some guidelines and examples on how to assess DAT-based tasks, so that the student can understand better the way these types of activities should be done.

In the fourth chapter, titled “Didactic dubbing and didactic voice-over,” the points that are explained in detailed are identical. Nevertheless, the AVT modes in this section are categorised within revoicing modes: didactic dubbing and didactic voice-over. This chapter begins with a description of both modes and what they offer. Although it says that these modes offer less possibilities for application than didactic subtitling, they can also take multiple forms that can help students to improve their level of the foreign language they are learning. The types of these modes are the same as the previous ones: intralingual, interlingual, and creative. What is more, the skills language learners are expected to develop are the same as with subtitling, but they go a step further as all the types of listening are developed: extensive, intensive, selective, responsive, autonomous, and interactive, while doing the task. It is important to always remember that the objective of this kind of exercises is not to train students to become audiovisual translators, but to show them a different, original, and effective way of enhancing their language skills.

The last chapter, with the title “Didactic audio description and didactic free commentary,” focuses on Didactic Audiovisual Description and the Free Didactic Commentary. Firstly, it gives an overview of the main types of both, differentiating between intersemiotic modes as well as intralinguistic and interlingual approaches to free commentary. Although they are considered the least studied, there are several publications that let us know their didactic possibilities, which also explore how their tools can improve trainees’ production skills. Besides, it also provides some guidelines for implementing these modes with examples of assessment and lesson plans, as in the previous chapters.

Last but not least, this monograph provides a conclusion which summarises the main ideas that have been developed in the book. The authors emphasise the importance of researching in this area, as it has not been fully explored yet, and they introduce some possible future lines of research. Additionally, they point out that it would be useful to create more projects in order to assess its impact in larger groups. Therefore, they consider that combining different methods and instruments, such as interviews, questionnaires, and statistics, may allow to discover new forms of DAT. Finally, they explain some areas that have not been delved into yet.

In summary, *Didactic audiovisual translation and foreign language education* describes in a highly structured and explicit way the different modes of DAT, as well as the skills and abilities that can be enhanced from each one.